

Discussion Questions for *The Air We Breathe*

1. When Beverly tells the story of her stroke, she says, “I have no doubt I had that stroke so I could be in that bed, that day, to sing to a woman I never met.” Has there been a time in your life when you've clearly seen God orchestrating circumstances—good or painful—in a way that clearly demonstrates He has a plan for your life?
2. Several characters in *The Air We Breathe*—Claire and Heidi, Molly and Dakota—are able to uniquely understand one another because they have been through similar grief situations. Have you ever been able to use your past experiences to comfort someone else going through the same thing?
3. Claire finally admits to Andrew she has kept her “real self” hidden because she didn't want to be a disappointment to him. Think about a time when you were less than transparent with someone close to you. Why didn't you want your true personality to show? What was the outcome of that situation?
4. It's not Andrew's ideals, Claire eventually realizes, but her own unrealistic expectations to which she's trying to live up. Do you have unrealistic expectations for yourself? In what areas are you trying to be “perfect?” How does it affect how you think God sees you?
5. Hanna and Claire form a special, unexpected friendship, drawn together by the Holy Spirit. Do you have a friend you know God put into your life? For what purpose do you think He did so? Is this relationship still growing, or was it only for a season?
6. Molly has a cathartic experience during the mass she attends with Tobias, especially when hearing the congregation declare, “...only say the word and I shall be healed.” Do you think there is healing power in saying things aloud? Have you experienced such healing?
7. Some may think Claire showing up on Dorsett Island was too much of a coincidence. Others may attribute it to God's providence. Still others may say it was a sort of cosmic fate, unrelated to a so-called supreme being. Have you ever “run into” someone at “just the right time?” How do you explain such circumstances?
8. While *The Air We Breathe* concludes on a hopeful note, it doesn't resolve neatly or answer all the questions the main characters are still asking. Are you satisfied with this? Do you like “ragged endings” or do you prefer novels where all loose pieces are tied up in a more settled way?